

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

Senate Committee on Teaching & Learning Report for Senate

Friday, June 13, 2008

Summary On The Work Of The Sub-Committee On Student Evaluation Of Teaching At Lakehead University

Last year we engaged volunteer members of the University community in a Task Force to assist a sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning in its examination of student evaluation of courses at Lakehead University. Based on the feedback generated both during and following the workshop, the following recommendations were proposed:

- The procedure currently in place for the distribution, collection and analysis should be continued for all courses delivered at Lakehead University until a review and revision of the instrument is completed.
- A plan to review and revise the instrument used at Lakehead University to capture feedback from students regarding courses and instruction should be developed and forwarded to Senate.
- Following approval of a new and improved instrument, recommendations regarding the use of the results of the survey and any changes to the procedures for distribution, collection, and analysis may be generated and will be brought to Senate.

The development of a course evaluation instrument is a complex, multi-step process. The sub-committee consulted with a specialist in measurement and outlined a process to develop, test, analyze and refine a new and improved course evaluation instrument for Lakehead University.

As part of the development and analysis process, the sub-committee articulated the purpose of conducting student evaluation of courses at Lakehead University along with identifying the measurement construct and domains.

Purpose of Conducting Student Evaluation of Courses at Lakehead University: Based on consideration of the policy governing course evaluations at Lakehead University, sections related to teaching responsibilities in the LUFA contract, and discussions with student, part-time lecturers, faculty, administrators, and various other stakeholders across campus, we have identified the following objectives for conducting student evaluation of courses:

1. To allow students the opportunity to provide feedback on their learning experience.

2. To provide faculty with formative feedback that they can use in refining their course design, assignment design, assessment techniques, teaching techniques, and interaction with students.
3. To provide summative feedback on teaching performance based on identified domains of assessment for use in annual reports, applications for renewal, tenure, and promotion, applications for merit, and nominations for teaching awards.

Measurement Construct, Domains and Proposed Questions: After reviewing numerous surveys from other universities as well as considering carefully the domains that we believe the student is able to provide valuable feedback on, we have identified the measurement construct and domains for student evaluation of courses at Lakehead University.

Student evaluations of courses at Lakehead University are intended to measure aspects of an instructor's teaching performance. Teaching Performance was defined to be comprised of the following six domains; course organization, classroom climate, instructor's performance, student learning, evaluation and assessment, and overall performance. A series of questions were developed to provide information in each of the domains. Students will be asked to evaluate their instructor based on their course experiences.

Providing An Opportunity To Customize The Lakehead University Instrument: We are also recommending that instructors or Departments/Schools be provided with the opportunity to add a specified number (e.g. $n = 16$) of supplemental questions to the revised Lakehead University instrument. This will allow academic units the flexibility to adapt the instrument to gain feedback on further aspects of teaching that are not covered by the standardized items. Questions would be chosen from an item bank containing a wide range of survey items that can be used to obtain feedback on particular discipline areas or unique aspects of a course (e.g. diverse contexts of teaching such as unit content, delivery mode including online and distance education, or resources that might impact on teaching).

Following four months of research and development, the subcommittee once again invited members of the task force to review and discuss the work completed by the subcommittee during a half-day session on May 16, 2008. The purpose of the session was to:

- Provide feedback on a draft university survey;
- Discuss the process proposed for refining the instrument based on instructor and student feedback, and for collecting and analyzing evidence related to validity and reliability;
- Examine an option for providing instructors or units with the opportunity to pose additional questions; and
- Provide input on the sub-committee's proposed timeline.

The instrument, which contains the standard set of questions, is currently being revised based on the feedback provided by the taskforce. The following process

and timeline was discussed and supported by the group. This phase of the sub-committee's work will culminate in presentation to Senate of a new instrument to assess student evaluation of courses at Lakehead University.

Student Evaluation Of Teaching At Lakehead University – Timeline for the Development And Assessment Of A New Lakehead University Survey

Task	Date	Status
Review Document With SCTL And Seek Approval Of Next Steps	Mar 31, 2008	Complete
Meeting With Measurement Consultant To Complete A Final Review Of Instrument And Process For Piloting And Analyzing The Reliability And Validity Of The Instrument	April 10, 2008	Complete
Meeting Of The Task Force To Review And Discuss Revised Instrument. Seek Feedback And Support For Proceeding With Testing Of Instrument	May 16, 2008	Complete
Respond To Feedback	June/July 2008	In Progress
Senate Report On Progress Of Sub-Committee	June 13, 2008	In Progress
Review Instrument With Students And Instructors	Fall, 2008	
Pilot Instrument (20 courses, n> 400 students)	Fall, 2008	
Recommendation To Senate For Revised Instrument	Jan, 2009	

The sub-committee extends their appreciation to the following participants for a thorough review of the materials and a productive afternoon.

Vic Smith (SS&H)
Nancy Luckai (Forestry)
Medhi Zahaf (Business Administration)
Lisa Korteweg (Education)
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Respectfully Submitted By The Sub-Committee Of Course Evaluation At
Lakehead University,

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